

REMARKS

Applicants acknowledge the withdrawal of the finality of the last office action and the detailed analysis in the current Final Office Action. The pending claims are provided in this response for easy reference by the Examiner and no claim amendment has been made in this response.

Claims 7 and 20 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Wikstrom. This contention, however, is respectfully traversed because the rejection lacks support in the disclosure of Wikstrom.

More specifically, the Final Office Action cites Fig. 1 in Wikstrom to show "processing a substrate to form at least one dielectric layer on the substrate and parallel line features embedded in the dielectric layer" in Claim 7. This contention apparently is based on a misreading of Fig. 1 because Fig. 1 in Wikstrom shows lines deposited on the substrate without being embedded in a dielectric layer formed on the substrate. In contrast, Claim 7 recites "parallel line features embedded in the dielectric layer" which is a much more complex system for stresses analysis.

For this reason, Claim 7 is patentable over Wikstrom.

In addition, other features in Claim 7 are associated with "parallel line features embedded in the dielectric layer" and thus Wikstrom fails to provide any disclosure that would support the rejections raised in the Final Office Action. For example, Claim 7 recites using analytical expressions to compute local stresses in the line feature from a first contribution based on the local curvature information and a second, separate contribution based on the local temperature information wherein the analytical expressions include geometry information of the line feature, the dielectric layer, and the substrate, and

material information of the line feature, the dielectric layer and the substrate." Wikstrom is completely silent on this part of Claim 7.

Therefore, rejection to Claim 7 is improper for lack of prima facie showing and Claim 7 is patentable.

Claim 20 recites a system with a substrate holder, a sensing module and a processing module. Wikstrom discloses a theoretical analysis of thin lines deposited on a substrate and fails to provide any disclosure on the recited system in Claim 20. The portions in Wikstrom in the Final Office Action are directed to equations for thermoelastic computations and have nothing to do with the recited system of Claim 20. Therefore, Claim 20 is patentable over Wikstrom.

In addition, Claim 20 is patentable over Wikstrom also because Wikstrom fails to disclose "a processing module programmed with analytical expressions to compute local stresses in the line feature from a first contribution based on local curvature information in an area having the line feature and from a second, separate contribution from local temperature information of the area having the line feature" and that "the analytical expressions include geometry information of the line feature, the dielectric layer, and the substrate, and material information of the line feature, the dielectric layer and the substrate." This is because, as stated above for Claim 7, Wikstrom is completely silent on features related to "parallel line features embedded in the dielectric layer."

Therefore, rejection to Claim 20 is improper for lack of prima facie showing and Claim 20 is patentable.

Turning now to Claims 17, 19 and 27, the Final Office Action cites Wikstrom in the same way as in rejecting Claims 7 and 20 and further relies on WO 01/82335 A2 to provide additional features that are combined with Wikstrom. Such

rejections cannot sustain because of the defect in the disclosure in the Wikstrom as stated above. As such, the contended combination of Wikstrom and WO 01/82335 A2 fails to disclose each feature in Claims 17, 19 and 27. Therefore, Claims 17, 19 and 27 are patentable over Wikstrom and WO 01/82335 A2.

It is believed that all of the pending claims have been addressed. However, the absence of a reply to a specific rejection, issue or comment does not signify agreement with or concession of that rejection, issue or comment. In addition, because the arguments made above may not be exhaustive, there may be reasons for patentability of any or all pending claims (or other claims) that have not been expressed. Finally, nothing in this paper should be construed as an intent to concede any issue with regard to any claim, except as specifically stated in this paper, and the amendment of any claim does not necessarily signify concession of unpatentability of the claim prior to its amendment.

Applicants ask that all claims be allowed. A notice of appeal is filed herewith to keep the application pending.

This response is filed timely with an extension of time for three months. Please apply a fee for the extension of time, and any applicable charges or credits, to deposit account 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

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